Claims

1.   In a communications system that supports conference calls that include an audio portion and a video portion, a method for selecting a primary video image from a plurality of video images, the method comprising the steps of:

determining an amount of audio data generated by each participant of

5   a plurality of participants in a conference call;

selecting a dominating audio participant from the plurality of participants based upon the amount of audio data generated by each participant of the plurality of participants; and

selecting a primary video image based on the dominating audio

10   participant.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining an amount of audio data comprises counting a number of audio packets generated by each participant of the plurality of participants.

3.   The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining an amount of audio data comprises counting an amount of audio samples in audio packets.

4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the primary video image is larger than a plurality of remaining video images of the plurality of video images.

5.   The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of maintaining the primary video image for at least a predetermined period of time.

6.   In a communications system that supports conference calls that include an audio portion and a video portion, a method for selecting a primary video image from a plurality of video images, the method comprising the steps of:

determining an amount of audio data generated by each participant of

5   a plurality of participants in a conference call;

determining whether a difference between an amount of audio data generated by one participant of the plurality of participants and an amount of

audio data generated by other participants of the plurality of participants exceeds a predetermined threshold;

10   if the difference exceeds the predetermined threshold, then selecting a dominating audio participant from the plurality of participants based upon the amount of audio data generated by each participant of the plurality of participants; and

        selecting a primary video image based on the dominating audio
15   participant.

7.   The method of claim 6 wherein the dominating audio participant generates an amount of audio data that exceeds an amount of audio data generated by each of a plurality of remaining participants of the plurality of participants.

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8.   The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of:

        if the difference does not exceed the predetermined threshold, then determining a loudness of audio for each participant of the plurality of participants; and

5   selecting the dominating audio participant based on the loudness for each participant of the plurality of participants.

9.   The method of claim 6 wherein the step of determining an amount of audio data comprises counting a number of audio packets generated by each participant of the plurality of participants.

10.   The method of claim 6 wherein the step of determining an amount of audio data comprises counting an amount of audio samples in audio packets.

11.   The method of claim 6 wherein the primary video image is larger than a plurality of remaining video images of the plurality of video images.

12.   The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of maintaining the

primary video image for at least a predetermined period of time.

13. In a communications system that supports conference calls that include an audio portion and a video portion, an apparatus for selecting a primary video image from a plurality of video images, the apparatus comprising:

a first processor that determines an amount of audio data generated by

5 each participant of a plurality of participants in a conference call;

a second processor that selects a dominating audio participant from the plurality of participants based upon the amount of audio data generated by each participant of the plurality of participants; and

a third processor that selects a primary video image based on the

10 dominating audio participant.

14. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first processor, the second processor and the third processor are a same processor.

15. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein at least two of the first processor, the second processor and the third processor are a same processor.

16. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the primary video image is larger than a plurality of remaining video images of the plurality of video images.

17. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first processor determines an amount of audio data by counting a number of audio packets generated by each participant of the plurality of participants.

18. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first processor determines an amount of audio data by counting an amount of audio samples in audio packets.